

September 29, 2010

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Ex. 6 - Personal Privacy

Lisa P. Jackson, EPA Administrator  
Ariel Rios Bldg.  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, D.C. 20460

Dear Ms. Jackson:

It is my understanding that the EPA is holding public hearings in this region regarding the environmental effects of natural gas drilling and fracking in the Marcellus shale. I will be unable to attend any of these hearings myself, but I want to make it clear to governmental officials at the highest levels of environmental concern that what is going on with the project to turn our region into a gas field is already doing irreparable damage and driving us from our homes. Schemes now underway to "pool" subsurface rights and compromise the integrity of our properties in other ways in favor of gas company operations will only make matters worse.

It is a matter of public record that since gas operations began there have been many incidents of methane tainting water wells, and there have been pictures in local newspapers of gas bubbling up out of the Susquehanna River in various locations. Fracking chemicals have been found in well water also. The director of the Pennsylvania EPA has been quoted as saying that our entire aquifer might be polluted by gas drilling operations. Those of us who have observed the behavior of natural spring water on our properties, in quarry pits, out of hillside outcroppings, and generally throughout the region can tell you that there are no known limits to where water may migrate or percolate. The entire area is one interconnected aquifer, and it is inseparable from the Chesapeake Bay watershed. I don't know whether there is any place in the country where it makes sense to take millions of gallons of fresh water, poison it, and pump it underground, but I am quite certain that this is not one of those places. At the very least, I beg that the EPA call a halt to fracking until and unless nontoxic fluids can be used in the process. Only when fracking fluid is fit to drink will it be fit to use here, and even then the peripheral damages will be enormous.

Meanwhile, the industrialization of this rural area has already run amok. Well pads desecrate the countryside, and pipeline connections will worsen the situation. The sounds of compressors and other noisy equipment will soon echo through the hills and valleys, and noxious petrochemical byproducts such as have been released elsewhere, e.g., Dish, TX, can be expected here too. As things are today, thousands of heavy trucks carrying water and sand and waste and industrial equipment have turned our roads into industrial highways where traffic roars through continuously day and night. As things are going now, industrialization of this formerly beautiful area is destroying the values of our properties and will soon drive us from our homes. I would have hoped that environmental protection would extend to concerns with livability as well as with matters of pollution, but perhaps that is too much to expect. Still, I must implore the EPA to help to save and to protect our region and all of those resources — including the Chesapeake Bay — which depend upon it.

Yours truly,

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# Report: Fracking chemicals found in Pa. water wells

By Michael Rubinkam  
The Associated Press

DIMOCK, Pa. — A private consulting firm says it found toxic chemicals in the drinking water of a Pennsylvania community already dealing with methane contamination from natural gas drilling. Environmental engineer Daniel Farnham said Thursday that his tests, which were verified by three laboratories, found industrial solvents such as toluene and ethylbenzene in "virtually every sample" taken from water wells in Dimock Township, Susquehanna County.

Farnham, who has tested water for both gas interests and for local residents, said it would be impossible to say that the chemicals he found were caused by gas drilling.

The chemicals, at least one of which, ethylbenzene, may cause cancer, are among dozens used to hydraulically fracture shale deposits to unlock natural gas trapped thousands of feet underground. The chemicals are also used in an array of products ranging from paint thinner to gasoline.

The contaminated Dimock wells are in the gas-rich Marcellus Shale, where a rush to tap the vast stores has set off intense debate over the environmental and public health impact of the drilling process. Millions of gallons of water mixed with numerous chemicals and sand are blasted deep into the earth to free gas from the shale rock. As much as 90 percent of the mixture is left underground.

Dimock residents sued Houston-based Cabot Oil & Gas Corp. last year, alleging the drilling company polluted their wells with methane gas and other contaminants. Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Protection said defective casings on at least three of Cabot's wells allowed gas to pollute groundwater. Cabot was fined more than \$240,000 and ordered to clean up the pollution.

On Thursday, DEP said it would spend about \$10.5 million to provide safe water for the affected Dimock residents, connecting their homes to a municipal water supply in Montrose, about six

miles away. The residents balked at an earlier fix that would have placed large, whole-house water treatment systems in each of the 14 affected homes.

DEP chief John Hanger told The Associated Press that the connection to public water is "the best, and really only, solution" and that if Cabot balks at paying the tab, the state will pay for the work itself — then go after Cabot for the money.

Officials and residents had discussed another option — drilling a well or wells and piping that water to the homes — but Hanger said it was dropped because "we don't believe that will ensure a permanent, safe supply of water."

A person who took part in the discussions said Hanger told residents the entire aquifer might be polluted by gas drilling operations.

"He said, 'I cannot guarantee that there is any water in the aquifer that is clean today, that will be clean next week, that will be clean six months after the whole system is put in, because of the drilling activity and the damage to the aquifer.' It was repeated twice," said the person, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss a private meeting.

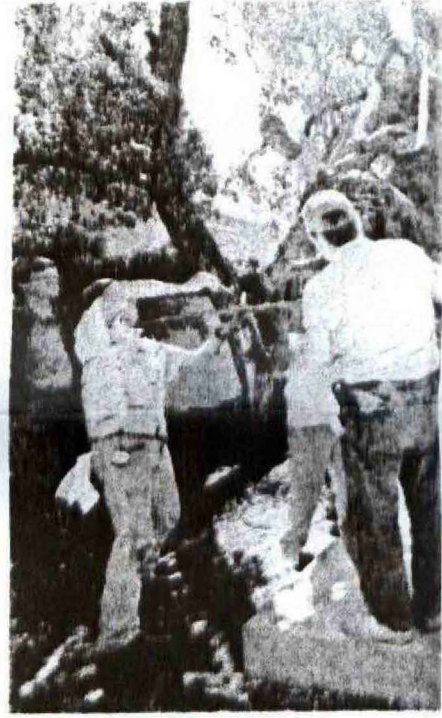
Later Tuesday, Hanger denied through a spokeswoman making the statement. DEP spokeswoman Helen Humphries said Hanger believes the threat of stray gas migration is the chief problem with drilling new water wells.

"We want to ensure there's not a chance for methane gas to migrate into the water wells. The best way of doing that is to install a water line to provide public water," she said.

On Tuesday, 13 families in Lenox Township, about eight miles from Dimock, sued another Houston driller, Southwestern Energy Co., claiming their wells were contaminated with fracking fluids. Southwestern denied any problems with its well.

In Dimock, Farnham said the water samples were tested independently by three labs, all of which showed the same results.

But Farnham said it's impossible to tell where the chemicals came from.



Crews used a crane to mount each of 1 between 350 and 850 pounds — in Bl sculptures, Friends of the Cathedral la benches, pedestals and other landsca

## Passion: Ble of the Cross

Continued from Page A-1

pastoral staff. They are on loan to the Archdiocese of Santa Fe for 25 years from an anonymous donor who purchased them from Galerie Züger on West San Francisco Street.

The team, which started early Thursday, expected to finish all the installations by the end of the day. The garden, built by Archbishop Jean Baptiste Lamy, was a showplace in the late 1860s, but later fell into neglect.

Earlier this week, the statues left a foundry south of Denver strapped to the backs of flat-bed trucks, covered with canvas or inside enclosed vans. Each weighs between 350 and 850 pounds. A 15th piece, a sculpture of St. John the Baptist, will be added later.

A set of the same sculptures in a smaller size was donated to El Santuario de Chimayó in 2007.

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## Cases: Government watchdog organization lauds decision

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competing concerns inherent in issues regarding public access to court records, including openness and transparency in government, accuracy in report-

pal and magistrate courts, which only handle misdemeanor criminal matters, to be removed from the online system after paper records are destroyed, usually within 1-3 years, and there is no electronic image

Court, and Welsh said it's possible that could lead to records being preserved longer.

Artie Pepin, director of the Administrative Office of the Courts, said paper records in magistrate courts are destroyed



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